



# The SPS Connection

July/August 2005

Print | Archives

## Subscribe to The SPS Connection

First Name

Last Name

Service/Organization

E-mail

[Unsubscribe](#)

## Table of Contents

[Table of Contents](#)

## Events

7/21/2005  
Project Management Institute  
Brown Bag Luncheon - Falls  
Church, Va.

[prev](#) [next](#)

## The SPS Socket

The JPMO would like your input for Increment 3 user training. Below, let us know how you rate your past experience with SPS training and visit the [COE](#) to fill out the full survey!

- ☐ Excellent  
☐ Average  
☐ Fair  
☐ Below Average

[Submit](#) [Results](#)

## Ask the Editor

We've opened a new section in the newsletter for you, the readers ...

[more](#)



### Who's Who: Mrs. Linda Beckner

The SPS Connection recently sat down with Beckner and discussed DoD's move towards enterprise business practices.

[more](#)



## Farewell Interview with Colonel Haynes

COL Jacob Haynes, Standard Procurement System (SPS) Program Manager since August 2001, is retiring from the United States Army and will be handing the SPS reins over to his successor, COL Quentin Peach on July 26. The SPS Connection caught up with Haynes on July 1 and asked him to share farewell thoughts with the SPS community.

[more](#)



### Service Talk

This is the place to hear directly from the SPS Desk Officers — from conference announcements and breaking news, to kudos and status updates. Service Talk is where you'll find service-specific news.

[more](#)

### SPS COE Portal Promotes Online Collaboration

On any given day, you'll find a wealth of fresh — and useful — material on everything related to the Standard Procurement System (SPS) ...

[more](#)



## Increment 3 Delivers Additional Functionality

Ever wish your contract work wasn't limited to your office desktop in Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD²)? Having the option to work on contracts remotely was one item on the functionality "wish list."

[more](#)

## NAVAIR China Lake: Long-Time Champions of PD²

In 1997, Ms. Karen Haden sighed with relief when the Department of Defense (DoD) announced the selection of American Management Systems' (AMS) Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD²) product for their Standard Procurement System (SPS).

[more](#)

Click here to send your SPS-related comments, questions or issues to SPS Desk Officers.

The SPS Connection welcomes all articles, photos and letters from SPS users and the community at large. Please send your input to [The SPS Connection Editor](#).

The SPS Connection is the Official SPS Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) newsletter, published on-line every two months by the SPS JPMO to provide SPS users with information about the program, policies, technical developments, operations, trends and ideas of and about SPS.

## Farewell Interview with Colonel Haynes

COL Jacob Haynes, Standard Procurement System (SPS) Program Manager since August 2001, is retiring from the United States Army and will be handing the SPS reins over to his successor, COL Quentin Peach on July 26. *The SPS Connection* caught up with Haynes on July 1 and asked him to share farewell thoughts with the SPS community.

**SPS Connection:** It's been a busy — and productive — four years. What are your thoughts as you plan to leave SPS and begin a new adventure?

**Haynes:** My thoughts are I'm proud. I'm proud of the Program. I'm proud of the Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) team. And, most of all, I'm proud of the SPS user community. Four years ago, users could have easily given up on SPS. The software failed to meet some of their most basic expectations, and SPS was an obstacle for more business processes than it improved. Additionally, the Program was behind schedule and over budget; criticism was widely publicized and accepted. Nothing seemed to be going right for SPS. Yet, when they could have easily dismissed SPS, users stepped up to the plate to help us turn the Program around. Users came from all corners of the world to participate in the SPS requirements, testing and deployment



COL Jacob Haynes

processes. They gave us the insight we needed to ensure SPS would help them reach mission success. Because of the extra effort on the users' part, look where we are now! For that, I thank you.

Of course, a strong user base coupled with the SPS JPMO is what really made it happen. The outstanding group of professionals with whom I worked on the SPS Program can stand toe-to-toe against any team in the Department. Talented. Dedicated. And Smart. The kind of "smart" that goes beyond knowledge and book smarts. More like intelligence and intuition...an innate ability to grasp the situation in its entirety and take the right steps to make sure each milestone is achieved — on time and on budget.

## Farewell Interview with Colonel Haynes [continued]

Today, SPS is on more than 23,000 desktops worldwide and was the tool used to purchase more than \$59 billion in goods and services for America's Warfighters in fiscal year 2004 alone.

We're at an exciting point for the Program, with Increment 3 on track to deploy in June 2006. Increment 3 is our most-powerful version yet... and it's designed to give users the functionality they're asking for. I'm pumped up about it. It's Web-based. It's database independent. And it's unlike any SPS version before... it will navigate intuitively, eliminate processes, allow users to customize 'the look' of forms and be the powerhouse the Department needs to ensure the Business Enterprise Architecture becomes reality. To me, it's like the Mercedes of SPS. Increment 3 provides the common architecture needed to reach across the entire logistics, acquisition and financial management communities.

**SPS Connection:** What advice do you have for users who want to have their voices heard by the SPS Program leadership?

**Haynes:** Keep doing what you're doing! Seriously, users are in every phase of this Program and they need to continue participating to ensure SPS meets their needs. In addition, I encourage users to share their insights and opinions. Nothing benefits the Program more than hearing from the people using SPS to do their jobs, and we have several avenues to make that possible. My best advice to have your voice heard is:

- Contact your Desk Officer, tell them how things are going at your site and your suggestions for how the system could serve your site better
- Contact the SPS Outreach Manager, [Mr. Frank Varacalli](#), ask him your questions and share your concerns or positive feedback
- Send a note to [The SPS Connection](#) editor, recommend a story and say what topics interest you. This newsletter is one of the accomplishments I'm most proud of; I instituted the newsletter to reach users with a regular, fun-to-read, Web-based tool and I'm happy to report that more than 9,000 users each month click through to the newsletter and its archives
- Contact your [Joint Requirements Board](#) representatives, let them know how SPS can be improved to better serve you

**SPS Connection:** Is there anything else you'd like to say to SPS users before you depart from the Program?

**Haynes:** I want to say thank you for your support and for your confidence. The procurement community is an increasingly important and visible player in DoD's business enterprise. The work you do everyday directly affects America's Warfighters on the front lines and for that, I want say thank you as well. You are making a difference.

Lastly, I ask that you give the same level of outstanding support to the incoming SPS Program Manager, COL Peach, that you extended to me these past four years. That support makes all the difference. Again, thank you, and I look forward to keeping in touch with simply the greatest DoD professionals in the world — SPS users.



# The SPS Connection

July/August 2005

[Print](#) | [Archives](#)

[Table of Contents](#) ▼

## Service Talk

### From the SPS Desk Officers to You!

This is the place to hear directly from the SPS Desk Officers! These are the folks responsible for SPS' success in your component.

From conference announcements and breaking news, to kudos and status updates, Service Talk is where you'll find important news from the Desk Officers.

[Army](#) | [Navy/USMC](#) | [Air Force](#)  
[DCMA](#) | [DLA](#) | [ODA](#)



Click here to send your SPS-related comments, questions or issues to SPS Desk Officers.

*The SPS Connection* welcomes all articles, photos and letters from SPS users and the community at large. Please send your input to [The SPS Connection Editor](#).

*The SPS Connection* is the Official SPS Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) newsletter, published on-line every two months by the SPS JPMO to provide SPS users with information about the program, policies, technical developments, operations, trends and ideas of and about SPS.

## **Service Talk: Army**

### **It's the PITTs!**

As the Department of Defense (DoD) prepares to deploy Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD<sup>2</sup>) Version 4.2 Increment 3 (v4.2.3), the Army finds itself at a critical juncture in preparing its acquisition community for the many changes to come. Not only does the Army need to plan for the transition of the current Standard Procurement System (SPS) sites to Increment 3, but also for the transition of remaining sites on legacy systems to Increment 3. In addition (and closely connected), is the DoD server consolidation initiative, which will have an impact on the deployment of Increment 3.

In light of these multiple efforts, the development of the SPS Planning Increment Three Team (PITT) was established in March. The team is led by Mr. Kevin Doyle, headquarters (HQ), U.S. Army Contracting Agency, Business Systems Management Directorate (BSMD). According to Doyle, "The PITT is the enabling mechanism for change management that will ensure success for the Army's deployment of Increment 3." The goals of PITT cover all aspects surrounding the eventual transition of Army sites to the new version. These goals include:



A Soldier from the 82nd Airborne Division awaits the command to jump from a C-17 Globemaster III onto drop zone Sicily, at Fort Bragg, N.C.

- Monitoring the status of Increment 3 planning, training, testing and deployment criteria
- Preparing Army acquisition communities for operational and cultural changes
- Leveraging server consolidation capabilities into the Increment 3 deployment
- Fostering knowledge-enabling communities to begin planning changes to business processes when deployed
- Providing a conduit point to Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy for the Army's transition plan

## Service Talk: Army [continued]

The PITT consists of two groups — the management team and the points of contact. The PITT management team consists of: Doyle (lead); the Army Desk Officer; HQ, U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC); representatives from the Army Business Center for Acquisition Systems (ABCAS), Ft. Lee, Va., and the Army Response Team (ART). With members of these different organizations, the PITT management team will have access to:

- Technical and functional knowledge of Army architecture, integrations and Concept of Operations documentation from ABCAS
- Leadership and Increment 2 status and impacts to communities from BSMD
- Transition input, from the Procurement Automated Data and Document System to SPS from AMC
- Information on Increment 3 development from ART
- Criteria and status of deployment, training and architecture of the Increment 3 suite from the Joint Program Management Office as needed

The PITT management team participates in bi-monthly teleconferences to define goals and topics, which are then discussed with points of contact from Army activities.

It is this complex, yet cooperative, endeavor among the various organizations and Major Commands that will spearhead the daily effort as we move forward to make the deployment of

Increment 3 as smooth of a transition as possible. We all owe a round of applause and, when required, a helping hand to those individuals who are contributing their knowledge and time to ensure that the Army's move to Increment 3 is an operational success!

### V4.2.2 Upgrades Begin in July

The Army successfully finished "integration testing" of v4.2.2 and is preparing to start Increment 2 upgrades in July. However, only a limited number of sites will be upgraded in July. The bulk of the upgrades begin in October. ●

—Mr. J.C. Chang, CACI Army Response Team, and Mr. Kevin Doyle, Army Contracting Agency

Mr. George Chavis, Army SPS Desk Officer



## Service Talk: Navy and Marine Corps

### V4.2.2 SR05 Upgrades

The Navy and Marine Corps began upgrading sites to Version 4.2 Increment 2 (v4.2.2) Service Release 05 (SR05) in June. Ms. Dale Taylor has been coordinating the Navy-Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) enterprise push to over 1,500 desktops, beginning with three Naval Air Systems Command sites the weekend of June 4 and concluding with the first enterprise push of Standard Procurement System (SPS) to the Marine Corps the weekend of June 25. There were a couple of glitches along the way, but the upgrade was an overall success!

Since this service release encompasses a major Sybase upgrade, the Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) is controlling when sites can upgrade. Sites are required to schedule the upgrade date through their Desk Officer and submit a pre-upgrade package for review to obtain GREEN status. If your site was not part of the NMCI enterprise push upgrade schedule, and you would like to upgrade to SR05, please contact [Mr. Eric Ferraro](#) at (703) 460-1364.

### V4.2.2 SR06 Testing

SR06 — sometimes called the “Navy release” because all the functionality improvements in this release were based



U.S. Marines with 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) transit the hangar bay of the amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge. Kearsarge and the embarked 26th MEU (Special Operations Capable) are conducting Maritime Security Operations in the Persian Gulf.

on the Navy's priorities — will be tested in Patuxent River, Md., July 18-29. An e-mail request for testers was sent on June 20. If you can participate in testing or in remotely running pre-condition scripts, please contact [Ms. Dale Taylor](#) at (301) 342-7088 or [Mr. Charlie Dolan](#) at (843) 425-6479.

### V4.2.3 (Increment 3) Build 4 Testing

The JPMO is in the process of putting together the Operational Scenarios for Increment 3 testing, which provides a great opportunity to ensure Increment 3 meets the

## **Service Talk: Navy and Marine Corps** [continued]

Navy and Marine Corps' contracting operational functionality requirements. An e-mail was sent on June 20 seeking contracting scenarios from Navy or Marine Corp users that will help test the requirements or business rules in Increment 3. Please contact [Ms. Sherry Hedding](#) (Navy Joint Requirements Board Representative) at (860) 433-6617, or [Ms. Darryn Miller](#) (Navy Component Management Office [CMO] team Increment 3 Testing and Integration Planning) at (301) 928-8228.

The first round of testing will be held at the JPMO Government Test Facility in Fairfax, Va., beginning on August 15. We are also investigating the options for conducting additional testing during this time period at a Navy facility.

### **Reports Writing Class Scheduled**

Over the past several months, many people have contacted me to ask when a reports writing class will be offered. Due to the popular demand, the Navy CMO has funded this class for Navy and Marine Corps users. The four-day class will be held in San Diego, Calif., the week of July 25. Special thanks to Mr. Jim Smith and the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command Systems Center in San Diego for the use of their facility to hold the class. Please contact me if you would like to attend the class (no cost for the class, only temporary assigned duty costs are at the expense of the site).

### **Metrics Reminder**

Each month, sites using SPS in production are required to post their monthly SPS metrics (operational users, number of awards and dollars obligated) to the

Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy [Acquisition Metrics Web site](#).

### **Desk Officer and IBM contract extended**

Since the last newsletter, the Navy Program Executive Office for Information Technology has extended the IBM Business Consulting Services contract through September 30, 2005. Ms. Darryn Miller has been added to the SPS CMO team as well. Miller is an SPS "alum" and has been involved with SPS as far back as 1999. Previously, she was supporting the Marine Corps in 2004 on the SPS-Interface replacement project. Miller is coordinating Increment 3 planning, testing and integrations for the Navy CMO. ●

— [Mr. Eric Ferraro](#), Navy/Marine Corps SPS Desk Officer





## Service Talk: Air Force

### Air Force Sole Sourcing: Utilizing SPS

The Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) recently established a sole-sourcing group at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (AFB). This group, independent of the current Standard Procurement System (SPS) Wright-Patterson F33601 production users, will be utilizing a unique SPS setup. Bolling AFB will be hosting this new community by establishing the users in their production database, and the users will be connecting remotely into Bolling's database from AFMC's Wright-Patterson facility.

Air Force Contracting Information Systems (AFCIS), Gunter AFB, and the Air Force Customer Service Team (AFCST) assisted with setting up the Procurement Desktop-Defense security model to accommodate this unique environment. The AFCST conducted an on-site at Bolling AFB on June 16 to verify that the security model, SPS Interfaces and Cognos ad-hoc reports were functioning successfully with the introduction of the new unique users in the Bolling database.

### Air Force FRB Meets "Face-to-Face" in San Antonio, Texas

The Air Force Functional Requirements Board (FRB) gathered in San Antonio, Texas



Air Force Airman 1st Class Chad Bowen visually inspects aircraft instrumentation and navigation systems batteries for corrosion.

this past May for their annual "Face-to-Face" meeting. Representatives from the Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition (SAF/AQC) office, AFCIS, AFCST and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) attended the "Face-to-Face" as well.

The following are a few of the agenda topics that were discussed:

- **SPS Increment 2 Adapter/Translator deployment** — The discussion included Adapter security testing for the Air Force Certificate of Networthiness and AFCIS Increment 2 upgrade automation of Adapter/Translator upgrade tasks.

## Service Talk: Air Force [continued]

- **EZQuery and Contracting Business Information System (CBIS) reporting** — This session focused on clarifying how EZQuery differs from the current CBIS system and the capabilities each will provide. EZQuery will have access to limited data and provide more simplified reports. CBIS will be used for more complex analysis, and the reports will be much more detailed.
- **Wide Area Workflow (WAWF)** — The discussion focused on manual service charges and how the SPS Interface/WAWF can be used to obtain electronic charges. A motion was passed to include representatives from WAWF and DFAS in the Air Force FRB as non-voting members.
- **"Zero Defects" Initiative** — The "Zero Defects" initiative was briefed by Mr. Karl Gerhards (U.S. Air Forces in Europe). Zero Defects is an initiative to obtain more accurate contract-action reporting. The goal of the initiative is for a Major Command representative to use EZQuery to view how well each site is adhering to correct business procedures and subsequently producing valid data.

A special thank you is in order for Mr. Kurt Stillman (Air Education and Training Command) for his efforts in the coordination and logistics of the "Face-to-Face" meeting. Additionally, thank you to all those who participated in making this a productive event.

### Navy Support

AFCIS is helping the Navy Construction Battalion in Gulfport, Miss., to re-establish SPS as their contract-writing software. AFCIS

recently provided technical support to rebuild their server's hardware and software platform in order to run SPS. Functional expertise was also provided to configure the SPS Adapter. AFCIS will continue to assist the Navy Construction Battalion through September 30. ●

— Ms. Susan Haskew, Air Force SPS Desk Officer



## Increment 3 Delivers Additional Functionality

Ever wish your contract work wasn't limited to your office desktop in Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD<sup>2</sup>)?

If you do, you have lots of company, and there's good news — Version 4.2 Increment 3 (v4.2.3) is Web based.

Lately, there's been a lot of emphasis on the Web capability of v4.2.3. But according to Ms. Melissa Pippine, the Design Team Manager for Increment 3, the truth is, Increment 3 is being developed to get the functionality the stakeholders and users want, not just to put SPS on the Web.

Here are just a few improvements to look forward to in Increment 3:

- **Collapsible and expandable sections** help you manage the large amount of data that goes into each form; you will have the options of viewing a single section of the form, a few sections or all sections at once. It's easy to compare data or to concentrate on one piece of the form.
- **The “breadcrumb trail” navigation** lets you return to any window at the click of a button. Each time you begin a new portion of a form, a link back to that



section is automatically placed at the top of your screen.

- **Configurable output** allows you to format the appearance of your document when it's time to print. If sites want a consistent look for all of their forms, system administrators may create style sheets for each form so everyone produces a standard look.  
Configurable output also is helpful if the federal government changes its specifications of how contracting forms should appear. Sites will no longer have to wait for an upgrade to be pushed out to start applying the change because they can adjust the forms themselves.
- **Generating (i.e., rendering\*)** a document is virtually automatic in v4.2.3

### Increment 3 Delivers Additional Functionality [continued]

— it's a one-step process versus several steps as in v4.2.2. Another key improvement is Increment 3's use of PDF files to publish documents instead of Microsoft Word®. The program no longer depends on another software product, and the integrity of data is ensured through read-only files.

- **Full-offer evaluation** has a much more robust capability than it did in Increment 2. For example, you are no longer limited to a price-based evaluation in the system; it's possible to do a non-priced, qualitative analysis as well.

"We're excited to bring the SPS users the functionality they've been asking for and waiting for," says Pippine who was also on the team that developed Increment 2. She adds that the commercial product Increment 3 is based on already has much of the functionality everyone wants. However, Joint Requirements Board requirements are added to make it even more powerful. ●

*\*Render is used in place of the term "generate" in Increment 3.*



## SPS COE Portal Promotes Online Collaboration

On any given day on the [SPS Center of Excellence \(COE\) portal](#), you'll find a wealth of fresh — and useful — material on everything related to the Standard Procurement System (SPS), from information on the latest software releases to upcoming events and available training.

Unlike your typical Web site, which is managed behind the scenes, material on the [COE portal](#) is flexible and easily updated by authorized content owners from the SPS Joint Program Management Office (JPMO). Opportunities for visitors to publish comments, and the Program Office's collective approach to handling the bulk of the content, make it a virtual collaboration center for the JPMO team, the components and the worldwide SPS user community.

The "meat" of the site is provided by individuals from each division within the JPMO and the components involved in the SPS Program. Because the [COE](#) is built on a user-friendly software product, adding and deleting content is simple, following the Windows® drag and drop paradigm. Professionals whose focus is on the SPS Program — and not Web design — can easily maintain content so that information about subjects like deployment and training comes directly from the source.



Screenshot of the COE site map page.

According to COE Portal Administrator Meredith Brodsky, it's one of the most in-depth of all the SPS communications outlets. "The site administration is based within the JPMO, so we have access to the most current information and documents," she says.

Teams, such as the Government Test Facility (GTF), take the portal's collaborative structure a step further, using their page to work together on documents and to share internal information. Generally, access to these pages is restricted to members of the internal team, but other interested parties are always welcome to submit access requests to the [COE Portal Administrator](#).

## **SPS COE Portal Promotes Online Collaboration** [continued]

The Web site's general audience may share information on unrestricted pages by participating in discussion boards on "hot topics," such as training and deployment, and providing comments in response to documents posted on the site by SPS team members. All documents are available to view, download and print.

Surveys are also a good way to help shape the site's content — and the Program. Surveys cover a range of topics, from the [COE](#) itself to program-level issues, and the topics change often. Recently, many spoke their minds about planning for the next joint users' conference by responding to the SPS User Survey on the structure and content of the conference.

Brodsky says that the JPMO appreciated everyone's participation in the conference survey and encourages everyone to re-visit the survey and share ideas on the next topic.

"We want to use this outlet to collaborate with the users as much as possible," she says.

Because the site's information is exclusively for the SPS community, access to the portal requires a login, which only takes sending an e-mail to obtain. Contact information and specifics for getting a login are available on the [COE Login and Registration page](#). ●



## NAVAIR China Lake: Long-Time Champions of PD<sup>2</sup>

*They picked PD<sup>2</sup> on their own in 1994; they've stuck with it, and they prove old tactics still apply.*

In 1997, Ms. Karen Haden sighed with relief when the Department of Defense (DoD) announced the selection of American Management Systems' (AMS) Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD<sup>2</sup>) product for their Standard Procurement System (SPS).

Haden, who was head of the Business Systems Office for the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) Weapons Division at China Lake, Calif., and Point Mugu, Calif., and the rest of the electronic acquisition team were already very familiar with PD<sup>2</sup>. The Weapons Division had independently shifted to the automated procurement application a year before DoD announced its decision.

Today, Haden still runs the Business Systems Office and has taken an additional role as the Deputy Director of Contracts for the NAVAIR Weapons Division. Many of the original electronic acquisition team members are still at the site as well.

Their story begins 11 years ago, when they ventured out on their own to find an automated procurement system that was



NAVAIR Weapons Division Electronic Acquisition Team, pictured from left to right: Mr. Alan Karty, Procurement Analyst; Ms. Norma Mangrum, Computer Specialist; Mr. Michael McClellan, Data Tech; Ms. Judy Stokely, Procurement Analyst; Ms. Karen Haden, Deputy Director of Contracts; Ms. Debbie Newton, Procurement Analyst; Mr. Derrick Hu, Procurement Analyst; Mr. Richard "Ollie" Oliver, Computer Scientist. Not pictured: Ms. Dorothy Courville, Procurement Analyst.

easier to use and compatible with popular software applications used in their offices. At the time, they were using the Navy's Automation of Procurement and Accounting Data Entry (APADE) system. According to Haden, the site started looking for a new system because APADE was difficult to use for major contracts and incompatible with standard automation software such as Windows.

"We didn't see a DoD or Navy solution coming any time soon," Haden says. "So,

we formed a project team to conduct our own market research.”

After comparing 18 different systems, the team concluded that AMS’ ‘Procurement Desktop’ product for federal agencies had the most promise. A partnership was formed with AMS to begin customizing the product to DoD standards.

Focus groups, including professionals from procurement and related fields, assessed “as-is” processes, compared to best practices from government and industry, and designed a model to support DoD procurement. AMS eventually used the model to develop the software that became PD<sup>2</sup>.

### **A Successful Transition**

When the system was ready to deploy in 1996, the NAVAIR Weapons Division’s approximately 200 contracting professionals were ready for the new software that would be compatible with Windows. The team executed a transition plan that involved training individual contracting teams — composed of contract specialists, clerical support and contracting officers — while “behind-the-scenes” specialists installed the software on their desktops and transferred their work from APADE to PD<sup>2</sup>. “When users returned from their class, the new program and all of their work was there,” says Haden. “They could apply what they learned right away.”

### **Get User Buy-In Early**

Haden says, “There are always growing pains associated with change.” However,

because the acquisition team started campaigning for everyone’s buy-in early, the users felt they were a part of the transition by the time the system was ready to deploy. Actions taken to achieve buy-in included:

- Open communications that informed all parties about the change through face-to-face meetings, briefings and e-mail
- Thorough documentation and communication of business process changes
- Collaboration between the policy office and the computing office to eliminate unnecessary procedures replaced by automation. Haden says, “We wanted to avoid just overlaying automation on top of existing processes. We wanted to use the tool [PD<sup>2</sup>] to reduce workload”
- Aggressive training that taught everyone the new business processes as well as how to use the software

The same principles have worked for subsequent PD<sup>2</sup> upgrades. To this day, the team waits until affected business processes are analyzed, documentation and support tools are updated and staff members are prepared before initiating upgrades. The emphasis is on consistent business processes to ensure data integrity and accurate reporting.

“I believe very strongly that the old saying ‘you can pay now, or you can pay later’ is absolutely true when you’re deploying a new system or upgrade,” Haden says. “Do the necessary work upfront before involving all the users, and you’ll have a much more successful implementation. If you don’t, then you pay for the lost productivity, pain and frustration of your users later on.”



## NAVAIR China Lake: Long-Time Champions of PD<sup>2</sup> [continued]

### Lesson Learned: Establish Processes to Check Data

The Weapons Division learned first-hand why establishing your own processes to validate contracting data is an important part of deployment preparation. When management received the first-round of reports, they realized very quickly that much of PD<sup>2</sup>'s "default" data is generic and users didn't put important data like delivery dates in appropriate data fields. For example, document names didn't identify what items or service were purchased — an order for a microscope or F/A-18 software development was referenced simply as SF 1449 or DD 1155. "It made it impossible to know what you were buying or what work you had in process using a report," Haden explains. As a result of their oversight, they faced a major database cleanup effort.

"Having good quality data is the real power and benefit of SPS," Haden says. "If your data isn't good, you can't reuse it. So, you don't reap the benefits of having an automated environment."

Since, the Weapons Division has built an extensive suite of reports — capturing everything from invalid vendor Tax Identification Numbers to warrant data in user accounts — which they use to monitor the quality of their data.

Haden credits her electronic acquisition team for the NAVAIR Weapons Division's success with SPS. "It's their hard work and dedication over the past 11 years that has made SPS such a success at our site," she says. "They made a difference at our activity, at all the NAVAIR sites, and I think their contributions to the development of the SPS

product made a positive difference for the Navy and the DoD procurement community." ●

The SPS Training and Deployment Manager Debbie O'Rourke reminds us today's environment has evolved greatly from the early days of SPS, but smooth deployments and upgrades still require careful planning and preparation:

- Establish a routine of nightly database backups and verify successful backup completion each morning
- Do not "overwrite" your backup files each day in case the new backup is not successful
- Prior to upgrading to Increment 2, take the "Upgrade Workshop" (Workshops will be given from October to January, and we will publish the details on the [Center of Excellence](#) Web site as soon as they are available.)
- Take advantage of all training resources (classes, computer-based training, Online Advisor in PD<sup>2</sup> and the [Knowledge Base](#)) to facilitate a smooth transition



## Who's Who in SPS: Mrs. Linda Beckner, SPS Functional Division Chief

When you send a suggestion to your Standard Procurement System (SPS) Joint Requirements Board (JRB) representative, chances are Mrs. Linda Beckner or someone on her team will work on incorporating your idea into the system. Beckner is Chief of SPS' Functional Division, which determines how SPS should work based on the needs of America's Warfighters and the policies of the Department. Her team constantly receives new requirements for the system from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, other programs and SPS users (through the JRB). Since there are a number of incoming requirements, Beckner and her team analyze and refine the list, so the requirements can realistically be implemented in SPS.

Outside the SPS Joint Program Management Office (JPMO), Beckner is a spokesperson for the SPS Program and often briefs high-ranking Defense acquisition officials. She also collaborates regularly with leaders from other programs in Department of Defense's (DoD) acquisition functional working groups.

*The SPS Connection* recently sat down with Beckner and discussed DoD's move towards enterprise business practices and SPS' role in the transition.



SPS Functional Division Chief Linda Beckner pictured at her desk at the JPMO, Fairfax, Va.

**SPS Connection:** In your opinion, what's been the most far-reaching change in DoD's acquisition landscape and why? How does SPS support this change?

**Beckner:** I believe the most far-reaching change is DoD's recognition of the business enterprise, meaning different business mission areas work together to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. While industry has understood the enterprise concept for a long time, DoD — and the federal government — have been slower to look at how the different business missions relate to each other. Now, we've recognized the need to incorporate all of the business mission areas together and to make

## Who's Who in SPS: Mrs. Linda Beckner, SPS Functional Division Chief [continued]

sure they talk to each other, which is a big change.

SPS supports the business enterprise because it recognizes the interrelationships of the different mission areas. Through SPS, we are bringing together the logistics, finance and acquisition communities.

**SPS Connection:** Where do you see SPS in the next year? In the next five years?

**Beckner:** In the next year, we're taking SPS to the Web. We anticipate June 2006 for the first deployments of Version 4.2 Increment 3 (v4.2.3), which brings a Web-based acquisition system to our users.

Over the next five years, I see SPS continuing to replace legacy systems and moving into new environments, such as our weapons systems and inventory control point acquisition communities. I also see more use of SPS in the financial and logistics communities, as they need to get the critical supply chain data and financial data from the system.

**SPS Connection:** Is SPS v4.2.3 the first Web-based procurement system in DoD? What doors will this capability open for the entire Department and for the users?

**Beckner:** Increment 3 is the first standard Web-based procurement system. It's possible that there are other Web-based procurement tools in use in DoD, but none have the Department-wide footprint that SPS has.

In Increment 3, with both Web and adaptive capabilities in SPS, the Department should

see marked improvements in overall business effectiveness and efficiency. Also, our users will no longer have to rely on paper inputs and outputs, which have governed DoD's business enterprise for so long. Everything will be available right on the Web.

**SPS Connection:** Why does SPS play a significant role in improving business processes?

**Beckner:** SPS uses standard data and standard business rules, which are decided on by the system's customers in a joint environment. Rather than accepting the limitations of using a commercial product right off the shelf, DoD chose to involve the stakeholders in the design of their automated acquisition system by creating the SPS Joint Requirements Board and a governance structure that makes sure the customer designs the system.

**SPS Connection:** What's the value of standardizing processes and systems across DoD?

**Beckner:** Most importantly, standardizing processes saves the taxpayers money because it enables DoD to do business and serve the Warfighter more efficiently. The Defense workforce and leadership can rely on standard inputs, outputs, data definitions and behaviors. For example, our business partners in the finance and logistics communities don't have to worry about important requisition data being lost or changed in SPS because, in accordance with DoD policy, SPS prevents users from overwriting purchase requisition data.

## Who's Who in SPS: Mrs. Linda Beckner, SPS Functional Division Chief [continued]

Standardizing systems means enterprise business partners have a single business entity to interface or integrate with when new or existing programs are implemented on the departmental or federal level. For example, with more than 23,000 users already on SPS, it's far easier for DoD to implement the mandated Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation than it would be if each organization still had its own system.

**SPS Connection:** How can readers find out more about SPS?

**Beckner:** There are numerous resources available that provide up-to-date information about the Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD<sup>2</sup>) application and the overall SPS program, including our vision for the future.

- The *SPS Connection* newsletter [archives](#) provide a variety of articles that range from detailed application-specific information, such as "Tips and Tricks" articles, to program information with topics like training and Increment 3.
- The [SPS Knowledge Base](#) is another excellent online resource. Both functional and technical information is available to SPS users through the [Knowledge Base](#).
- SPS Info Mails deliver timely information on the program straight to users' e-mail inboxes twice a month. Subscribers find tips for using PD<sup>2</sup>, information about upcoming events, solutions to technical issues and occasional urgent messages in Info Mails. (Subscription information is available on the [SPS User Profiles Database](#).)

Additionally, each Service and Agency using SPS has a Desk Officer on the JPMO staff.

The Desk Officers are excellent contacts for users with questions about SPS at their specific site.

**SPS Connection:** Please share a Web site/resource that you like and explain why you think it will be helpful to SPS users.

**Beckner:** I highly recommend the [SPS Center of Excellence \(COE\) portal](#). This Web site has really evolved into a comprehensive information center with the latest news, special announcements, training materials, slide presentations and conference information. It also includes links to all of the other resources I've mentioned. In addition, the [COE](#) has been updated with special areas for each of the Services and restricted access pages that allow specific teams, such as the JRB, Technical Working Group, etc., to collaborate online.

The [COE portal](#) is available to all SPS users and requires a one-time registration. We hope all members of the SPS community will take advantage of this new resource.

**SPS Connection:** Is there anything else you'd like to add?

**Beckner:** Yes, I've been the requirements lead for the SPS program for a decade. My Functional Division teammates and I have well over 130 years combined experience in the acquisition field. We're proud to serve the public trust and believe that the Standard Procurement System goes a long way in providing a useful and efficient tool for the DoD. We welcome the opportunity to tell folks about our standard system and the impact it can make on their communities. ●

## Ask the Editor

### Have a burning question about SPS? We want to hear from you.

*The SPS Connection's* goal is to deliver useful, timely information about the Standard Procurement System (SPS) to users on a regular basis. However, we're aware there are a lot of questions out there we're not addressing. So, we've opened a new section in the newsletter for you, the readers, to send in your questions about the Program. A member of the team at the Joint Program Management Office will respond.



**I would like to know when we will be able to use Windows XP operating systems with SPS. Windows XP is becoming the standard.**

— Ms. Clare Heinsler, SPS System Administrator

SPS Increment 2 Service Release 05 is the first version certified for Windows XP and 2003. Increment 1 is Windows 2000- and Office 2000-Pro certified. Upgrading to Increment 2 permits a user to take advantage of the latest operating system software. ●

— Mr. Frank Varacalli, SPS Outreach Manager

### We Want to Know What Works for You

Does your site have a useful tip or trick that can be shared with the rest of the SPS user community? If so, let us know about it. Send in a short description, and we'll highlight your site in "Ask the Editor."



# The SPS Connection

July/August 2005

 [Print](#) |  [Archives](#)

[Table of Contents](#) ▼

## Desk Officers



Army Desk Officer:  
[Mr. George Chavis](#)  
703.460.1037

Navy/USMC Desk Officer:  
[Mr. Eric Ferraro](#)  
703.460.1364

Air Force Desk Officer:  
[Ms. Susan Haskew](#)  
703.460.1423

ODA Desk Officer:  
[Ms. Liz Gooding](#)  
703.460.1038

DCMA Desk Officer:  
[Mr. Roger Berger](#)  
703.460.1332

DLA Desk Officer:  
[Ms. Kate Ehrle](#)  
703.322.5990

---

Click here to send your SPS-related comments, questions or issues to SPS Desk Officers.

*The SPS Connection* welcomes all articles, photos and letters from SPS users and the community at large. Please send your input to [The SPS Connection Editor](#).

*The SPS Connection* is the Official SPS Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) newsletter, published on-line every two months by the SPS JPMO to provide SPS users with information about the program, policies, technical developments, operations, trends and ideas of and about SPS.



## SPS Socket Results



Have you plugged into the socket yet? Cast your vote below.

The JPMO would like your input for Increment 3 user training. Below, *let us know how you rate your past experience with SPS training* and visit the [COE](#) to fill out the full survey!

- ☐ Excellent  
☐ Average  
☐ Fair  
☐ Below Average

[Submit](#)

### July/August

The JPMO would like your input for Increment 3 user training. Below, *let us know how you rate your past experience with SPS training* and visit the [COE](#) to fill out the full survey!

#### Excellent

35%

#### Average

22%

#### Fair

30%

#### Below Average

13%

23 respondents

Click here to send your SPS-related comments, questions or issues to SPS Desk Officers.

*The SPS Connection* welcomes all articles, photos and letters from SPS users and the community at large. Please send your input to [The SPS Connection Editor](#).

*The SPS Connection* is the Official SPS Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) newsletter, published on-line every two months by the SPS JPMO to provide SPS users with information about the program, policies, technical developments, operations, trends and ideas of and about SPS.